

Decorating Trends

Why Laminate Is Taking The Floor

(NAPSA)—What looks great in a home, is kind to your wallet and is good for the planet?

If you answered laminate flooring, you have a good idea why U.S. sales of laminate are up over 300 percent since 1997.

Installations of laminate flooring can be traced from its birthplace in Sweden to northern Europe and to the U.S. in the mid 90s, where it did not take long for consumers to discover its incredible durability and low maintenance. Lines that originally included a few plank options now feature an enormous variety of exotic and domestic wood grains, as well as stone and geometric patterns in tile format.

As designs have evolved, so has the basic construction of laminate flooring. Manufacturers continually work to improve its performance characteristics, while flooring companies refine the overall manufacturing process.

Wear layers that were originally 10 times more resistant to abrasion than countertop laminates are now testing at 20 times more resistant. This improved durability means no more refinishing, which adds up to huge savings and eliminates the hassle for homeowners.

Not only is laminate now more durable but, thanks to cleaner pulps and constant refining of formulations, the wear layer is practically transparent.

Between new resins, improved board technology and a continual evolution of the wear layer, laminate flooring is now so tough it just doesn't wear out. The ideal



Manufacturers have made laminates even more attractive and easier to install.

manufacturers are striving for is to make it look as good as possible if it's going to last as long as it does.

A new technology called Woodprint Technology provides a level of realism previously unavailable in the market. Laminate flooring has historically had a very uniform surface, making it too perfect for some. Laminate producers are now building imperfections into the product to make it even closer to what Mother Nature produces.

Another new innovation is glueless commercial-grade laminate floor, which can really speed up installation time.

Laminates also win a favorable review from environmental organizations, since it is an environmentally preferable material, consisting of recycled materials.

For more information, visit the Composite Panel Association at www.pbmdf.com.